



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CLASS SPECIFICATION

CLASSIFIED

PROGRAM SPECIALIST I
PROGRAM SPECIALIST II

Class No. 005248
Class No. 005244

■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

Under general direction, to apply in-depth knowledge of Health and Human Services Programs in order to act as a hearing officer to those who have been denied public assistance, or to apply that knowledge to analyze, develop and implement Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) policies, procedures and program changes; and to perform related work as required.

■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Program Specialist is a professional management class series. Incumbents in the series have specialized knowledge of State regulations governing various Health & Human Services programs, including Self-Sufficiency, Child Welfare Services, Automated Systems, and Aging and Independence Services. Incumbents use this knowledge to act as a hearing officer, or interpret and implement new legislation and regulations in order to develop County policies and procedures, or provide legislative analyses and opinions to the Director of Health and Human Services.

Program Specialist I:

Incumbents in this class perform journey level work and represent the County in public assistance appeals hearings, which requires in-depth understanding of child welfare, self-sufficiency, or in-home support services programs in order to interpret and explain to a hearing officer why services to an applicant have been denied or revoked. Incumbents may also act as the hearing officer for programs offered exclusively by the County.

Program Specialist II:

Incumbents in this class perform complex journey and/or lead level work in programmatic analysis and agency-wide policy and procedure review. Incumbents in these classes review proposed rules and regulations from the State and analyze the impact those changes may have on the County. Program Specialist II positions also handle the most complex or sensitive public assistance appeal cases, and may act as supervisor over the Program Specialist I appeal officers.

■ FUNCTIONS

The examples of functions listed in the class specifications are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the classes. Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such duties are a logical assignment for the position.

Program Specialist I

Essential Functions:

1. Receives verbal and written client complaints from HHSA staff.
2. Oversees, extracts and analyzes statistical data from a variety of in-house databases.
3. Researches State regulations and Federal guidelines and County policies and procedures as these relate to appeals and complaints.
4. Clarifies regulations and/or policies by interviewing State and County personnel.
5. Clarifies disputed issues by interviewing clients and authorized representatives.
6. Investigates facts of appeals and complaint cases, including interviewing witnesses.
7. Organizes information to enable comprehensive defense documentation for hearing purpose.
8. Collaborates with individuals and/or community agencies for the purpose of gathering evidence, reaching conclusions, and preparing the County's witnesses for testimony.

9. Conducts after-hours office audits, interviews and surveillance.
10. Presides over evidentiary hearings and renders decisions to resolve disputes involving General Relief and County Medical Services programs.
11. Responds to requests for information from other County or State entities, attorneys, clients, and community groups.
12. Provides responsive, high quality service to County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public by providing accurate, complete and up-to-date information, in a courteous, efficient and timely manner.

Program Specialist II

Essential Functions:

All the functions listed above and

1. Analyzes proposed and current legislation for fiscal, programmatic and legislative impact on County.
2. Recommends changes to County policies and procedures, and prepares responses to County, State or Federal agencies as needed.
3. Develops written program policy and procedure guide material for line staff to implement regulations, which includes workload impact analyses.
4. Provides program expertise to contracting staff in the development and administration of program services.
5. Reviews legal claims and provides relevant information to County Counsel.
6. Reviews, analyzes and recommends revisions to program materials prior to distribution.
7. Reviews actions of staff and contractors to insure that federal audit recommendations for correctness and compliance are followed.
8. Prepares correspondence, statistical reports and monthly workload studies.
9. Supervises professional staff.
10. Provides training on new legislation, or changes to current regulations.
11. Chairs meetings and workgroups.

■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

The following apply to both classes:

- Federal, State and local funding, regulations, and provision of services in applicable areas, for example: Foster Care, County Medical Services, Food Stamps, Welfare-to-Work, Medi-Cal.
- Health and Human Services Agency forms and operating procedures related to employment and social services.
- Social Work principles and practices.
- Community resources and agencies related to employment, adult and child protective services.
- Staffing factors and cost computations.
- Program goal setting, staffing, performance and fiscal standards, controls, record keeping and evaluating techniques.
- Automated information systems related to social services.
- The General Management System in principle and in practice.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.

Program Specialist II (in addition to the above):

- The principles of supervision.

Skills and Abilities to:

The following apply to both classes:

- Effectively manage time and organize workload in a rapidly changing environment.
- Effectively negotiate with a wide range of people in various capacities.
- Exercise tact, discretion and good judgment.

- Analyze problems accurately and develop an effective course of action.
- Develop, test and implement new and revised methods and procedures.
- Prepare complex written reports, instructional operational materials, manuals, letters and position papers.
- Speak effectively to both individuals and groups.
- Interpret legal decisions and opinions, State and Federal legislation and regulations.
- Demonstrate independence and leadership.
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing.
- Establish effective working relationships with management, employees, employee representatives and the public representing diverse cultures and backgrounds.
- Treat County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Assess the customer's immediate needs and ensure customer's receipt of needed services through personal service or referral.
- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

Program Specialist I:

1. A bachelor's degree in a social or behavioral science, public, personnel or business administration, or a closely related field AND one (1) year as a Supervising Human Services Specialist, Social Worker II, or higher level SW class; OR,
2. Any combination of higher education and eligibility determination or social work experience at the Supervising Human Services Specialist, Social Worker II, or higher level SW class, totaling five (5) years.

Program Specialist II:

1. One (1) year experience as a Program Specialist I.
2. A bachelor's degree in a social or behavioral science, public, personnel or business administration, or a closely related field AND two (2) years as a Supervising Human Services Specialist, Social Worker II, or higher level SW class; OR,
3. Any combination of higher education and eligibility determination or social work experience at the Supervising Human Services Specialist, Social Worker II, or higher level SW class, totaling six (6) years.

Note: A master's degree in a social or behavioral science, public, personnel or business administration, or a closely related field from an accredited college or university may be substituted for one (1) year of the required experience above.

■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classifications. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.

Frequent: sitting, use of dominant hand, repetitive use of hands and simple grasping. Occasional: walking, standing, bending and twisting of neck, bending and twisting of waist, climbing stairs, power grasping, pushing and pulling, reaching above and below shoulder level, and lifting and carrying files weighing up to 10 pounds.

■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in these classes, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation for field travel. Employees in these classes may be required to use their own vehicle.

Certification/Registration

None Required.

Working Conditions

Office environment; exposure to computer screens.

Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Misdemeanor and/or felony convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a background investigation.

Probationary Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in these classes shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

New: May 6, 1985
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